

(U//FOUO) 2009 SIGDEV Conference: 'Best Yet and Continuing to Improve'

FROM: [REDACTED]
SIGDEV Strategy and Governance (SSG)
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(U//FOUO) SIGINT Development Strategy and Governance (SSG) hosted the annual Five-Eyes event from 1-5 June, attracting approximately 1372 participants, including 297 travelers to Fort Meade, of whom 100 were Second Party delegates. Eighty-six representatives from the wider US Intelligence Community, covering agencies as diverse as CIA (a record 50 participants), the Air Force Research Laboratory and the National Air and Space Intelligence Center were also in attendance. Analysts who could not attend the conference were able to view streamed live presentations.

(U//FOUO) This large and diverse audience is drawn together each year in recognition that this key, single event enables unprecedented visibility of SIGINT Development activities from across the Extended Enterprise, Second Party and US Intelligence communities. More importantly, it provides a way for these disparate groups to synchronize discovery efforts, share breakthroughs, and swap knowledge on the art of analysis. The SIGDEV Conference (SDC) engagement continues to enable the Intelligence Community to perform mission and achieve results none could achieve on their own.

(U//FOUO) Over 200 separate briefings, demonstrations, roundtables, workshops and tours were offered throughout the week across five threads. Chris Inglis, Deputy Director NSA, delivered the SDC introductory remarks and Bran Ferren (right), Co-Chairman and Chief Creative Officer, Applied Minds Inc., delivered an engaging keynote address on this year's theme, "SIGDEV: From Ideas to Outcomes." Both speakers highlighted the increasing focus of the digital information age and the challenges facing SIGINT operating in cyberspace, a likely area of specific focus for next year's SDC.

(U//FOUO) In particular, Mr Inglis (left) spoke of how the US and its allies face huge challenges with cyberspace as "no domain is so richly populated," has more information stored within it, underpins so many other domains, changes as "rapidly, agilely or fluidly" or requires the application of diverse skill sets. In Mr Inglis's words, "the need to understand and lay bare cyberspace is the stuff of SIGDEV; it will underpin our success in this space." The need for the offensive (SIGINT) and defensive (Information Assurance) realms to integrate was flagged as critical, with Mr Inglis suggesting that the future may see the community talk about SIGDEV as "cryptologic development", given that "increasingly, SIGDEV is the necessary underpinning for the totality of what we do in cyberspace."

(U//FOUO) [REDACTED], Associate Deputy Director for SIGDEV and [REDACTED], Chief Signals Survey & Analysis, presented the annual DILKE-ALLEN Award, Charlie Tevis Community Service Award and the Gold Pulse Award.*

(U//FOUO) As in 2008, we included facilitated sessions in this year's conference and found that they continue to prove their value by resulting in focused discussions, generating clear actions for post-conference efforts. For the first time in SDC history, this year's conference included an entire one-day thread focused on the Future Technology Threat, the results of which will help us keep up with ever-changing technology trends. Because of this success, we will continue to offer narrow-focused threads in the upcoming conferences.

(S//SI//REL) In another first for the 2009 conference, the Communications System Analysis thread conducted four "hands-on" workshops that brought together analysts from various agencies to work

some of the Extended Enterprise's most challenging problems. In one of the workshops, a facilitated session was dedicated to botnets. This provided an opportunity to demonstrate some of the Agency's most powerful analytic tools and an opportunity for exchange of information among the analysts in attendance. The workshop also provided an opportunity to go over all the SIGINT tools and techniques that are used in the identification and processing of this malicious software, generating possible new ways for identification and exploitation. The workshops provided an excellent opportunity for our junior analysts to work side by side with some of the leading experts in this field. Our intentions next year are to push for more of these types of workshops.

(U//FOUO) The Five-Eyes SIGDEV Heads received detailed summaries of each thread's outcomes and actions during the conference wrap-up session. Post-SDC momentum and activity is being maintained by thread leads and analytic tradecraft teams with quarterly updates on SDC efforts and actions to be provided to those Five-Eyes SIGDEV Heads. This increased effort in post-conference engagement is seen as a key factor in living up to the SDC 2009 conference theme, whereby Five-Eyes SIGDEV elements will work to take SDC 2009 ideas and turn them into SIGINT outcomes.

(U//FOUO) If you weren't able to attend, you can still benefit by viewing presentations and sessions at the SDC 2009 webpage ("go sdc2009").

(U//FOUO) After-conference surveys were distributed to those who had registered for the conference. Results are still coming in and will be posted on the SDC2009 website as soon as possible. Comments from these surveys are extremely critical as we begin planning for the 7-11 June 2010 conference. Further details regarding 2010 conference themes and key dates will be revealed in the coming months.

(U) Notes:

* (U//FOUO) Nominations for the 2010 DILKE-ALLEN Award are now being accepted. Please canvas your organization to identify SIGINT Development activities where two or more Five-Eyes agencies have come together to produce exceptional work that is worthy of the 2010 award. To find out more about the award nomination submission process, and see a list of the 2009 award winners to include the winning submission, visit the award website.